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DRAMA IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM, PAPERS RELATING TO THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SEMINAR ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH (DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1966). THE DARTMOUTH SEMINAR PAPERS.

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THIS DISCUSSION OF DRAMA, DRAWN FROM PAPERS AND IDEAS PRESENTED AT THE DARTMOUTH ANGLO-AMERICAN SEMINAR ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES AND PRESENTS METHODS OF EFFECTIVELY TEACHING DRAMA IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM. THE FIRST CHAPTER EXPLORES THE TYPE OF EDUCATION MOST EFFECTIVE FOR A STUDENT LIVING IN A DEMOCRACY AND THEN ANALYZES THE WAY CREATIVE DRAMATICS, THROUGH TEACHING IDENTIFICATION WITH VARIOUS ROLES, CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH AN EDUCATION. THE SECOND CHAPTER BRIEFLY OUTLINES A STEP-BY-STEP PLAN FOR ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN DRAMATICS. IN THE THIRD CHAPTER, THIS PLAN, WHICH EXTENDS FROM STUDENT DISCUSSIONS OF PLAYS THROUGH GROUP ACTING PROJECTS TO SHAKESPEAREAN PRODUCTIONS, IS DISCUSSED IN DETAIL, WITH EMPHASIS PLACED ON THE VALUE OF SEQUENTIAL PROGRESS. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GIVING TEACHERS THE TRAINING NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT SUCH A PLAN OF EDUCATION IN DRAMA ARE PRESENTED IN THE FINAL CHAPTER. INCLUDED IN APPENDICES ARE A SYLLABUS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL DRAMA AND APPROACHES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL DRAMA. (THIS MONOGRAPH IS AVAILABLE FOR $1.50, ORDER NO. 36259, FROM NCTE, 508 SOUTH SIXTH ST., CHAMPAIGN, ILL., 61820.) (LH)

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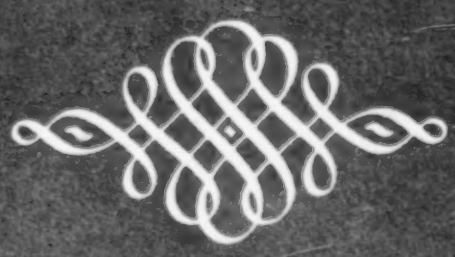

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THE DARTMOUTH SEMINAR PAPERS

DRAMA IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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DRAMA IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

papers relating to
the Anglo-American Seminar
on the Teaching of English
at
Dartmouth College, New Hampshire
1966

by

DOUGLAS BARNES

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FOREWORD TO THE SERIES

The Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English was cosponsored by the National Association for the Teaching of English in the United Kingdom, the Modern Language Association of America, and the National Council of Teachers of English in the United States. Supported by funds from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, it met at Dartmouth College in August and September of 1966. Recommendations of the entire Seminar have been reported in two major volumes: *The Uses of English* by Herbert J. Muller (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967) and *Growth through English* by John Dixon (Reading, England: NATE, 1967; available in North America from MLA and NCTE).

This publication is one in the following series of six monographs presenting papers, summaries of discussion, and related materials being published for the cosponsoring associations by the National Council of Teachers of English.

Creativity in English	Geoffrey Summerfield, editor
Drama in the English Classroom	Douglas Barnes, editor
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PREFACE

Drama is not an educational frill, an applied ornament that can be dispensed with. It is not merely an extra activity for those students whose high intellectual abilities leave them time and energy for lightweight amusements. Nor is it merely an innocuous way of busying those incapable of more abstract intellectual activities. Drama is an essential part of a democratic education.

This discussion, based on work done at the Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English held at Dartmouth College in August and September 1966, places drama and dramatic experiences within an overall conception of the activities of the English classroom. It throughout assumes that the central task of the English lesson—as opposed to the purpose of English as used in other subject areas—is to help the pupil use his native language to deal with his experience both as an individual and as a participant in many different groups.

Generous quotations from papers written at the Seminar have been embedded in an essay that unites and draws conclusions from them. The quotations are ascribed to their authors, who are not, however, to be held responsible for the interpretations put upon them; the present writer must take full responsibility for those.

This pamphlet is the result of an international collaboration which developed into a warm personal friendship. All members of the Dartmouth group deserve thanks for what—acknowledged and unacknowledged—this essay has taken from them, and apologies for what it has failed to express.

DOUGLAS BARNES

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I. DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

In a society in which knowledge and attitudes change little from generation to generation and the *status of an* adult is determined by his parents' social position, education need mean no more than supplying knowledge and attitudes that will fit the child for his predetermined role. A suitable education will be rigid, dogmatic, and authoritarian; it will deal in certainties, both practical and ethical. All imaginative expression will tend to the public form of ritual. Individual imaginative experience will seem of little importance, partly because the adult will seldom or never be required to deal with persons, incidents, or situations outside those of his usual environment. If he is asked to speak or write, these will be reproductive activities; they will not require new arrangements or interpretations of experience but only a traditional view of the world. Thus the education provided by a rigid society need not prepare pupils to sustain uncertainty, need not support them in unique experience, but instead need only to prepare them for situations in which their responsibility would be to a social or ethical code.

In twentieth century urban democracies, however, a more or less wide range of roles is open to each young adult. More than this, the diversity of our complex society

tolerates a wide range of opinions, attitudes, and evaluations. That is, our society partakes of the nature of drama: it speaks not with one voice but with many, and these often contradict one another in ways that not even the wisest of us can resolve. But this society with its contradictory voices is not only outside but inside each one of us. Each must learn to tolerate the many voices within himself, to recognise and express his own variousness, to learn how to live amongst uncertainties and divided loyalties.

Is the teacher, then, when he imagines a pupil prepared to face the world, to conceive of him as entirely uncommitted, able when challenged by life only to reply, "There's much to be said on both sides"? Clearly this is not what we intend. On the contrary, we need young men and women who are able to choose, and we need an education which prepares them to assume the responsibility for choice.

A democracy needs men and women who can project themselves imaginatively into all the complexities of a situation without suffering the heated fears and intolerances of those who cannot sustain uncertainty. We need men and women who can delay choice until their knowledge and sympathy have prepared them for choice, but who can, if necessary, sustain themselves when faced with conditions they have not been able to foresee. We need men and women who can hold in suspension the complex demands and contradictions of life without being driven by anxiety to simplify them to a slogan or an inflexible code. We need men and women who can move amongst the various voices of our society, responding variously and selectively to them. Such men and women are not trapped within stereotyped responses but are able to adjust their behaviour to the occasion, able indeed to *choose*.

Fostering the Ability to Choose

If these are truly the needs of our societies, what implications have they for education? Creative thinking is impossible to anyone who dares not isolate himself

from his fellows by sustaining an unpopular point of view. It is equally impossible for the compulsive isolate who maintains his own eccentric point of view without any consideration of others. Education should thus strive not for the acceptance of one voice, but for an active exploration of many voices.

What do we mean by saying that the adult should have many voices at his disposal? What voices are available to choose among? One kind of "choosing a voice" is the public one of deciding upon an occupation; another is the perpetual adjustment of language and behaviour to the flux of people and situations—literally, a matter of choosing what voice to speak with.

The choice of a job is very important for adolescents, since it implies the choice of a lifelong role. Families differ greatly in the support they give young people trying to make this important decision, and boys and girls often turn for help to their schools. Information and counselling are not enough, however, especially in the context of a subject-oriented curriculum which seems to say that the school is interested in future historians and chemists but not in future factory workers and shop assistants. Many schools, presenting pupils as they do with predetermined social organisations, seem not to prepare pupils for any kind of choice, let alone such a major one as that of future vocation. A school that seriously intends to support pupils in choosing occupations must see it as a major aspect of curriculum planning, not as a few sessions of consultation when leaving-age approaches.

But choosing a public role is only one kind of choice—one which frees no man from the responsibility of making a whole range of personal choices about who he will be, about the range of voices with which he will be able to speak. To be a shop assistant or a chemist is not enough; that would be to abandon our most personal being to the uncontrolled forces of our society and to make no attempt to prepare young people for a life in which each is a person and not merely an operative. It is clearly necessary to initiate as many adolescents as possible into the conceptual structures of specialist subjects, but as we do so

we must make them aware of the danger of taking one view of life to be the only one. We want shop assistants and scientists who are not totally imprisoned in their public role and public language, who can step back and evaluate what they are doing. In short, we need specialists who can speak with many voices.

The humanities, as well as the sciences, demand students capable of originality, of creativity—those who can, in effect, listen to many voices and choose the most appropriate. Yet men and women to be capable of original thought must also be capable of sustaining the complex social relationships that go with originality. The voices we use in making the myriad of adjustments in living add up to the persons we are. Our wish is neither to speak with one unvarying voice which steamrollers over all persons and situations alike, nor to speak with chameleon voices which reflect only the expectations of others. The English teacher, with his special interest in the personal development of his pupils through language, is specially concerned with "choosing voices" in this sense, since his task is to help his pupils speak, read, and write with all the fullness of which they are capable.

Benjamin DeMott suggests something of what is implied in the word "fullness" as he deals with good writing:

> Your good writer is your wide and various man: a character nicely conscious of the elements of personhood excluded by this or that act of writing and ever in a half-rage to allude to them: to hint at characterological riches even where these can't be spent. Thus the sin of wit in some grave prayers, and simultaneities of exaltation and muck in Pope or Swift. . . . Bad writing is bad usually because the writer does not know or will not tolerate his own variousness in his prose. He has not learned to relish his power to project a life of feeling; he is in a word undemonstrative. Teaching that goes endlessly back to the task of showing the student his potential life of feeling is teaching that goes against the bonedry sentences of self-reduced man. And it is this sort of teaching that becomes possible when drama moves toward the center of the English classroom.

What DeMott says is as true of speech as of writing. Each requires a disciplined language—a discipline that can be as much a matter of adjustment to subjective experience as of adherence to objective criteria such as

referent, situation, or audience. DeMott goes on to urge the intellectual challenge of finding language that is true to one's subjective experience:

> The drama class becomes the place where the talk aims at naming a feeling or sets of feelings, at understanding the complications and contradictions of human response. I am aware of a widespread conviction that only the mindless can speak with interest about details of feeling. But consider: what person who has once sought intensely and responsibly to know his own feelings in a particular situation could accept an account of the enterprise as intellectually unchallenging? The surest proof of the excruciating difficulty of achieving full consciousness of one's own or another's responses is the rarity of effort toward that end: it is much easier to settle for public cant and private self-deception than to reach for human innerness.

In rejecting the undemonstrative man, DeMott is emphasising a quality deeply affecting not only the life of the individual but also the health of society itself. For the sense of shared humanity upon which social life depends itself depends upon our ability to communicate to others both our ideas and our feelings. The full man is able to admit to his sympathetic awareness a contradictory array of persons, attitudes, actions, and beliefs. And if in the end he has to reject any of these, the rejection will be based upon insight and not merely upon a fear that his equanimity may be disturbed by alien experiences. However much he may deprecate destructiveness, for example, the full man recognises this quality within himself; the rigid man, afraid to admit his own weakness, burns to destroy the evil of destructiveness in others.

In our increasingly industrial and urban societies, we need citizens who can give themselves warmly across the gulfs that divide man from man, and who can deal with the variousness and self-contradiction within themselves. This is one kind of communication without which society cannot survive. Schools can take only part of the responsibility for developing this kind of communication; insofar as they do, however, it will be not through imposing uniformity but through providing activities tending towards what we have called drama.

What we are recommending, even at college and university level, is an approach to all education that can reasonably be called "dramatic" in that it deals in complexes of attitudes rather than in simple certainties. It is through dramatic activity that we can most readily express, recognise, come to terms with, and begin to evaluate that variousness in others and in ourselves that is at once the wealth of humanity and the force that threatens to destroy it.

It will be clear to the reader that we have been using the word *drama* in a very inclusive way, to refer to the variousness within society and the individual as well as to the activities which by expressing this variousness can help students develop that fullness of insight upon which true choice is based. What these have in common is the idea of a human unity—whether individual or social—which is tensely heterogeneous. More than a series of activities to be followed in the classroom, we have implied an attitude toward the whole of education.

Arthur Eastman, identifying drama as basic to all literary forms, illuminates its power by emphasising its scope and depth:

> Drama is larger than literary—and earlier. It is mime and talk as well as script. It opens to the inarticulate and illiterate that engagement with experience on which literature rests. It permits them, and people in general, to discover their private human potentialities, to participate in and share the experience of the group, to make experience public.
>
> Drama is primal. There is the actuality—people, voices, gesture, movement. Next, the physical presentation, the acting it out. And then, the literary imitation, the script. Drama is the matrix, the primal ocean in which the other literary forms float—monologue and dialogue, exposition, narration, description, argument, lyric, oration, epigram, apothegm. Drama is the source from which, by temporal or philosophical abstraction, other literary forms flow: from its present develops the past tense of story and history; from its conflict and dialogue develop argument and discourse.
>
> Drama liberates. It releases its practitioner from the inhibitions of self-consciousness. As it is play, make-believe rather than believe, it permits the individual to try on an attitude or to model an emotion without paying actuality's price. It releases its practitioner, too, from the explicit interpretive restraints more common in other

> forms of literature. The actor may and must find within himself what it is to be jealous, envious, distraught, ambitious. Finally, as the practitioner becomes creator, drama opens to him the discovery of something approaching the totality of himself. The many voices of his play and the many emotions—conflicting, harmonizing, commenting—are all his, spectroscopic fragmentations of a self which willy-nilly speaks in all he writes and which, discovered and released, can speak hereafter in his writing with new richness and vitality.

It is not only in literature that the outward prepares for the inward: in real life we tend to take on those roles which the conditions of our lives ascribe to us. Drama—and the whole of literature—can free us from that ascription by helping us create new roles, new possibilities for ourselves, in imagination.

Secondary pupils are reaching out towards an adulthood they do not know, in a society that offers an array of models, many of them teasingly glamourous. Most adolescents are healthily sceptical, but they do want to try everything, to reassure themselves that adults are not withholding some delight by labelling it meretricious or evil. Drama can help such students as much to find what they do not want as to discover what they do want—the two are not separate.

Drama and Talk

The pervading medium of the English classroom is "talk": the kind of hesitant, informal, joint exploration of topics—be they immediate to the pupils or distant—that is usual amongst adults when they approach an experience or a structure of ideas which they have not yet made fully articulate. Such talk is often highly dependent on subtleties of intonation and gesture; amongst children it tends to be less explicit in showing structural relationships than does their written language. At times it is anecdotal or concerned with the joint recreation of an experience, and here gesture and movement are more and more important as the talk moves towards acting out the experience. As children mature, talk more often tends towards generalisation but never loses the possibility of moving back

to the particular. It is through such talk that children can best help one another come to terms with an experience. Such talk does not occur in the classroom, however, without deliberate design; it is most likely when small groups of pupils discuss matters which engage their deepest attention. Works of literature enter this talk as voices contributing to the conversation, and the talk in its turn helps children take in what the voices have to say by providing a context for them.

It is proposed, then, that drama should be seen as part of this classroom talk. Like all talk it may arise from a topic proposed by the teacher, from a shared experience, or from a work of literature. Drama, however, differs from other talk in three ways: movement and gesture play a larger part in the expression of meaning; a group working together upon an improvisation needs more deliberately and consciously to collaborate; the narrative framework allows for repetition and provides a unity that enables the action more easily to take on symbolic status—to have meaning beyond the immediate situation in which it occurs.

This symbolic nature of dramatic activity is perhaps its most specific characteristic; joint improvisation within a situational framework requires children to stylise speech and action, and this facilitates the process of symbolising. When we encourage pupils to write poems, we hope they will discover how to organise the material of their own experience into a model—or image—which will have validity in organising diverse and distant experiences. This happens very readily in drama; young children in their play present just such images of wide validity. It is useful to conceive children's dramatic activities—whether improvised or scripted—as varying along two dimensions: along one the material used will vary from children's everyday experience to literature based on material which alone they would never have imagined; along the other, the dramatic use made of the material will vary according to the extent to which the action remains a literal representation or finds symbolic value in the course of the acting.

Dramatic activities, including acting from a script, in-

volve choice-making at several different levels. At the most literal level, pupils explore their experiences in the family, at school, and with strangers. By assuming a role, the child is trying out a version of himself and his possibilities without committing himself permanently; as in story-telling or poem-making, he is not only choosing but also laying a basis for future choice. In contrast to private fantasies, dramatic images created by a group (which thereby acknowledges their common validity) have great power. For many children, the acting out in symbolic—and often unrealistic—form of their fears, hatreds, and desires helps them assimilate those too disturbing to be acknowledged literally. When at a maturer age they come to interpret a script, they are again involved in choice-making, which though of a different kind may become quite as important.

Even within the activities of the English classroom there are distinctions to be made: it is not enough to speak of "drama" and assume that we are understood. It is necessary to say what we do *not* mean. Anthony Adams clarifies this point:

> It is important to distinguish between drama, theatre, and the literary study of dramatic texts. The first is our main concern here and represents a particular form of classroom drama growing largely out of improvisation; we are interested in the education of children in English through drama, not in the production of trained actors and actresses. The concept of "playing to an audience" is irrelevant to a large part of our concerns, and there may indeed be times in classroom drama where an audience is a hindrance or a danger. Thus it is drama at the level of the individual or the group rather than primarily at the level of public presentation which we call theatre, with which we are concerned.

Thus we distinguish sharply between the literary study and the dramatic interpretation of texts. The first is a non-dramatic activity, but we are not implying it should always be avoided; this is clearly a matter of how it is done and at what stages of the student's development. Adams continues:

> We would stress that in its emphasis upon things before words; in its capacity for keeping open a wide-ranging series of choices for the individual pupil; in its ability to grapple with the complexity

> of relationships in a group and dynamic situation, drama provides an invaluable corrective to the otherwise verbally dominated culture of the school. It offers the opportunity of new modes of communication at a nonverbal level which is particularly valuable to the child whose verbal endowment is at first limited: through experiments with situations in drama he may come to a conceptualisation of them which can lead to their exploration in verbal terms.
>
> This we see as no less important for the verbally gifted. There seems to us little doubt that one of the benefits of education in drama is the element of "release" that it gives to pupils from what might otherwise be a hidebound and constrictive educational situation. This freedom, we believe, comes to inform the rest of their work, in speech and writing, with a vitality and vigour that is difficult to replace.

The Potential of Dialogue

All recognise dialogue as an essential characteristic of drama, and all adults know its importance in thinking and in communicating. As teachers, however, we have not always made full use of it. Dialogue, in its various aspects, is the factor all learning experiences have in common. Thus it is not only possible but desirable to use drama as the approach to classroom activities concerned with speaking and writing. Whether these are sparked by a literary work or by a life-situation, the individual's response will reflect the influence of his society—most particularly, the segment of that society represented by his immediate environment.

James Moffett points out the social origin of thought, emphasising it is, in fact, the internalisation of social processes:

> At least as early as Henri Bergson and William James, psychologists have suggested that thought is inner speech. The notion has been subscribed to since by the social psychologist George Herbert Mead and by an impressive roster of contemporary specialists in learning theory and child development that includes Piaget, Vygotsky, Luria, and Bruner. The general concept is that most of our thinking, the verbal part, is a kind of unvoiced conversation with oneself. After acquiring speech socially, through interaction with other people, the child begins to distinguish between the speech he utters for himself and the speech he utters for others. At first he voices aloud all speech, typically failing, in his egocentricity, to discriminate talking to himself and talking to another. Once he does discriminate, this early "egocentric speech" splits into internal and external discourse.

> Both are instrumental but have different functions: internal speech serves to process information as a guide to action; external speech serves to communicate. The earlier egocentric speech is a "thinking out loud," a running accompaniment to play and thus probably not distinguished by the child from his other bodily actions. Part of this patter is simply a verbal encoding of physical things, and part is planning and self-direction—all of which he later inhibits because it is not socially adaptive, and may even be socially detrimental if uttered aloud. In shunting some of his own speech underground, the child is in effect internalizing the words, forms, and ideas of other people, learned by imitation and interaction. Anyone can observe for himself some stages of this internalization. A child will tell himself aloud—in perhaps his parents' exact words—that "we should not touch the vase." Children thinking about a task can be seen to move their lips, so that an experienced lipreader can tell what they are thinking as they verbally meditate the task.
>
> It is not generally acknowledged just how much the social medium of exchange and the chief instrument of thought are one and the same—language. Outer and inner speech reciprocally determine each other; they are a serpent with its tail in its mouth. What needs emphasis, however, is the probability that thought is the internalization of social processes.[1]

This implies that the intellectual development of a child may well depend not so much upon what has been presented to him in formal instruction but upon the dialogues in which he has taken an active part; the child whose experience of dialogue is limited in kind or extent is likely also to be limited in the intellectual strategies at his disposal.

It must be through language that the processes of dialogue are internalised to become the processes of thought, dialogue becoming dialectic. Moffett continues:

> The qualifying of thought and elaborating of sentence structures develop together. Outside the classroom this development through vocal exchange occurs all the time, but in the classroom it can be furthered deliberately by creating kinds of dialogue in which questioning, collaborating, qualifying, and calling for qualification are habitual give-and-take operations. . . .
>
> I am asking the reader to associate dialogue with dialectic. The internal conversation we call thinking recapitulates previous utter-

[1]Ed. note: This and subsequent quotations from James Moffett are drawn from a working manuscript of the book, *Drama: What Is Happening* (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1967).

> ances *as amended and expatiated on.* The social actions underlying vocal exchange have counterparts in the forms of language. Dialogical structures and linguistic structures can be translated into each other. Thus what *can* seem like dead, academic matters in a classroom are dramatizable. . . .
>
> Although a student might come to use connectors, expand modifiers, subordinate clauses, and embed sentences just by sheer imprinting —stylistic imitation—I think it is safe to say that such learning would never go far or deep without the functional need for qualification and elaboration arising in dialogue. This is why I do not think exercises with dummy sentences, no matter how superior the grammar, will teach students how to use various linguistic constructions appropriately and habitually. The expatiation process of dialogue adjusts a speaker's verbal and cognitive instruments at just the moment when he cares most and in just the way that he, individually, needs this adjustment.

Although for the purpose of analysis we can consider separately the development of language, intellect, and personality, in reality the three are closely interrelated. Each influencing the others, they develop side by side—but not necessarily at the same rate. We have all known pupils whose language and intellectual development—at least in some areas—was so far beyond their years that their personal development had not had time to catch up. Our classrooms also present evidence of one aspect of language deprivation: the inability to sustain social roles appropriate to certain ways of using language. All secondary teachers know pupils who, although able to perform written tasks in the explicit and general language required by schools, can not join in a free discussion of the same topic. Although in a limited way able to use the language, they are unable to undertake the role that accompanies it, cannot think aloud in that role.[2] Students so deprived—from whatever level of society they come—need urgently an education conducted by dramatic methods in which they are not presented with final certainties, but are required to face the uncertainties involved in discussing and planning their work, methods analogous to those denominated "discovery" in primary schools. As Moffett points out:

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[2] This is a free paraphrase of a suggestion made orally during the Dartmouth Seminar by Basil Bernstein.

> . . . Even the most advantaged child will never escape the cognitive limitations of family, class, social role, etc., unless the school provides him a kind of discursive experience to internalize that is different from what he internalized at home. The cranium is the globe, but the globe *any* child grows up in is always too small for later purposes, especially in the chameleon civilization we know and are increasingly going to know.

Not only our thought, but also our very personality is an internalisation of social processes. Moffett approaches this aspect of the subject through works of dramatic literature:

> Self and mind are social artifacts, and the constituents of the self are the constituents of society; thought involves incorporating the roles and attitudes of others and addressing oneself internally as one would another.
>
> Reflected in Hamlet's soliloquies are various "voices" of his culture, society, class, and family—belief systems, attitudes, points of view, and roles. These could be personified and each assigned certain lines from his soliloquies, thus creating an external dialogue. Hamlet is full of voices, ghosts. So is Willy Loman. And so are we all. Consider what it means when we say "I keep telling myself . . . ," "I debated with myself . . . ," "I talked myself into . . . ," and so on. Biologically each of us is a whole; only cognitively and culturally can we be split into speaker and listener.
>
> To consider the same issue in reversal, the whole of a play may be considered as a soliloquy by the playwright, who is ventriloquizing. A playwright says what he has to say not through a monologue but through a colloquy of created voices. The ensemble of these voices externalizes his mind. This kind of ventriloquizing amounts to fractionating the total voice production of which he is capable, to breaking down his self into the many points of view, attitudes, and roles which actually and potentially comprise it. The failure of young readers to appreciate Dickens' caricatures, and the failure of critics to "understand" *Waiting for Godot*, stems from an insistence that each character be a whole person instead of recognizing that the dramatis personae are a whole person and that the characters are embodied tendencies and potentialities of that person. Beckett's Gogo and Didi, Pozzo and Lucky, are components of personality, paired. If a play works, communicates, it is because the same social forces that have installed voices in the author have also installed them in the spectator. Whether the playwright is sociological like Shaw, psychological like Strindberg, or both like Arthur Miller, the characters tend to speak as both personality components and as social forces. In *After the Fall* Miller finally completed a technical

> innovation begun by O'Neill in *Emperor Jones*, Tennessee Williams in *The Glass Menagerie*, and himself in *Death of a Salesman;* by exploiting the incorporation process for the very form of his play, he made the stage a peopled head.

What is true for the playwright is true for each one of us: "the same social forces that have installed voices in the author have also installed them in the spectator." The dramatic encounters and adjustments that constitute normal living become in the end part of us: we become what we are by doing what we do. What classroom drama can add to this normal process is partly a greater range of encounters, partly the freedom to experiment "without paying reality's price," and partly the enrichment offered by works of literature—the opportunity to make the author's voices temporarily our own.

Just as classroom dialogue can be seen to tend toward drama broadly defined, so can drama in the narrower sense of play-acting be seen as an aspect of what we have called "talk." Adams calls attention to the dramatic element inherent in all effective teaching:

> There is a sense in which all effective teaching in the classroom situation is dramatic by its very nature. The relationship within the classroom is a dynamic one; there is a constant interplay between the teacher and the class and also between members of the class itself. This is a group situation and the relationships that are set up in it develop strong dramatic overtones. Thus learning becomes not just a matter of the imparting and receiving of instruction, but a corporate activity in which the teacher is drawing out of the members of the class what they have to contribute to the learning situation; it is an orchestration rather than a solo performance by the teacher on his dais. One of the reasons why drama is so valuable an activity educationally is that it enables the teacher to capitalise on this inherent characteristic of the classroom; it is in fact one of the most natural ways in which effective teaching can take place—through it the classroom becomes an ensemble.

Classroom dialogue will vary according to its content and purpose. At times it will be fully dramatic with pupils adopting personae and using movement as well as voice to make or represent dramatic images; at other times it will approach closer to discussion, the exchange of literal comments. But whether the dialogue be literal

or symbolic, it will merit the name "drama" by not seeking to impose a single "right answer" but to contain a complex of attitudes and judgments—to be "orchestration rather than solo." It is in this sense that we assert drama provides the most effective approach to a democratic education.

II. DRAMA IN ENGLISH TEACHING

The significance of drama, as we have defined it, in the development of the individual is generally acknowledged. Dramatic play, either the manipulation of some object or the taking of a dramatic role, occupies much of the time of preschool children; such activities are usually accompanied by a flow of egocentric talk concerned not with communicating but with perceiving, planning, and symbolising. For most children, this talk and play has become socialised by the time they begin school, leading to the group dramatic play so typical at this level. The talk which allows them to share symbolic activities is, however, only a small part of the total activity. From sources close to them—at first the home, later stories and popular media—children take the symbols which structure their play, but what is taken over is little more than names and catchphrases which identify roles. To an outsider, the play seems formless, repetitive, and of little meaning; yet the intense interest of the participants testifies to its significance for them. It is only later, perhaps from ten years onwards, that children begin to explore a situation more explicitly, so that their improvised dialogue and actions have public validity. As this power to make public the dramatic symbol increases, new classroom possibilities emerge, perhaps from twelve years

onwards. First, it becomes possible to introduce scripts providing explicitly the structures provided at an earlier stage by folk tales or by the popular media. The teacher tries to find scenes (or whole plays) which offer symbols as powerful as before, but which through language give a more sensitive and orderly meaning to the dramatic activity. Second, it is possible to ask pupils to recreate social situations. By mid-adolescence the child's language abilities have developed to the extent that he has begun to specialise his language uses according to his purpose and situation. For those adolescents who are deprived of a wide range of social experience, dramatic recreation of realistic situations may be an important way of developing control of a range of registers. This should be subordinated to the symbolic function of drama, however, because drama, inseparable from expressive movement and demanding less verbal explicitness than other activities, can become for many children the most important creative medium.

Coordinating Activities

There are further reasons for subsuming drama in an overall conception of English. Though some schools in Britain timetable drama as a separate subject with its specialist teacher, the development of pupils through dramatic language and movement is not different in kind from development through other English activities. Both dramatic and nondramatic work will be impoverished if there is not in the classroom an easy and immediate movement to and fro. Anthony Adams provides a good example:

> The teacher starts with talk. A story is told, or may be extrapolated from the class itself: a situation is built up. Assuming a town environment for the children, one may talk about the kind of people to be found in the street on a busy Saturday: the varying activities that go on, the heterogeneous collection of individuals and groups of individuals. Detail develops as the common experience of the class is drawn upon, and members of the group are encouraged to share their experiences with the others; gradually a situation arises in which each member of the class assumes the role of someone in a street on a busy Saturday afternoon—some will be separate individuals, e.g., shopkeepers, others will be part of a family out for

a walk, etc., etc. The whole group now enacts the street scene, each child playing his role to his own satisfaction and responding as necessary to the roles being assumed by the other children. Suddenly the teacher injects a new stimulus: a sharp bang on the tambor perhaps with the accompanying information that a stone has just been thrown through a shop window over there: *how do you react?* Each child individually, or as part of his group, reacts appropriately; the scene can then be "frozen" and the situation and its implications discussed. From here it is possible to send the children away in small groups to work out through first discussion and then in action "what happens next"—each group can take the simple basic situation and work upon it to produce a kind of improvised drama. After having spent as long upon the exercise as seems useful, the teacher can suggest that each child, still enacting his role, return home, tired after the excitements of the day, go inside and sit down and relax. Thus the lesson ends on a note of absolute quiet and relaxation—necessary physically and psychologically for the children after a period of activity of this kind.

After a brief discussion of what has gone on, various kinds of written assignments can arise: character sketches based upon the people in the street scene, describing what happened in the role of spectator or participant, describing it from several points of view, contrasting the policeman's notebook viewpoint with that of the small boy in the crowd. The teacher, having regard to the individual range of achievement in written work, can assign different aspects to different pupils. Writing thus begun can be finished for homework. The next lesson's work will probably start with some sharing and discussion of the written work, developing in any number of directions: the searching of anthologies for poems on the street-scene theme, the mounting of a display, the making of a tape (a radio broadcast about the incident perhaps), or any way at all of consolidating and "publishing" the work done so far is appropriate. A whole series of lessons can grow out of an introductory activity of the kind described; though equally well, if it has failed to capture the imagination of the class, it may be necessary to drop it and turn to something else.

For such activities to succeed, the classroom environment must allow children to take on roles without fear of embarrassment. Each must feel he is valued as a person, with a valid contribution to make; and he must not be expected to subordinate his perceptions and needs to a pattern imposed by the teacher. Such control as there is should come rather from the need to collaborate with other members of the group in activities meaningful to all.

A classroom in which children are prevented from leaving their desks and in which silence is enforced will

not come to life immediately at the word "acting." Adolescent self-consciousness, related as it is to the child's uncertainty about his status with his peers, will gradually disappear as the class works together in small groups. However, a more immediate way of helping them is by beginning a lesson with individual activities which do not involve role-playing and which are intended only for the pupil himself and his teacher. A class scattered about a large room can engage in an impersonal activity (such as miming the unwrapping of a large parcel); once pupils lose themselves in this solo activity it is possible to move on to work in pairs and then in groups, introducing, once the pupils have gained confidence, activities which require language and role-playing. Solo miming is especially valuable in introducing the controlled actions without which pupils cannot adjust to group activities.

From Improvisation to Script

Once children of secondary age can involve themselves fully in improvised drama, it is possible to introduce scripts. The recreating of a dramatic script does not differ greatly from improvisation, and similar methods may be used in the classroom. In everyday living, awareness of the verbal and nonverbal context allows us to choose intuitively the patterns of intonation, emphasis, and gesture by which we convey meaning; similarly in improvised drama we make these choices intuitively. When faced with a script, however, the child is likely to "read" it, that is, make relatively neutral choices which demonstrate his uncertainty of the role and of the situation which gives it meaning. This is not a mere technical failure, but a failure to imagine himself inside the dramatic situation, *a failure to recreate it as a work of literature.* What the teacher must do, therefore, is to set up a situation in which the pupils' insight into the nature of the dramatic situation enables them to make intuitively the appropriate choices of voice and movement. This is exactly analogous to the provision of a context of talk for a poem or a prose work. The required insight will arise from classroom talk and improvisation about a situation related to that of the scene

to be acted: once the class has begun to act out the situation in an inward way—once it has become a joint symbol for them—it is possible for the teacher to introduce the scripts so that existing insight will enable the pupils to recreate the printed words intuitively. The following example illustrates the method:

> A class of thirteen-year-olds was asked to improvise in pairs a squabble between a man and his supercilious wife who leaves in a huff, to individually show a mixture of fear and determination in approaching a growling dog, and to improvise some other situations closely related to the Prologue of Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion.* When these improvisations had been practised, shown to one another, and talked about, the children worked in threes upon a short section of the Prologue, acting it with scripts, putting down the scripts and improvising dialogue, watching other groups act, and discussing first the intonations and movements and then by a natural progression the nature of what was being presented. When they finally acted the whole Prologue, this slight and conventional episode came to life because it was filled out with perceptions of their own.

The Whole Play

When our pupils, especially the more able ones, reach mid-adolescence, it becomes possible to help them recreate a whole play from a script. Major scenes may be prepared by different groups in advance and then the whole performed with a linking commentary. Or the class may work in pairs or larger groups on the most important scenes, with linking scenes read by the best actors (who have been given scripts in advance). By such methods we can allow pupils time to enter imaginatively into some scenes, while at the same time moving fast enough to give them a sense of the whole. Beyond this comes the fully produced play in which pupils learn their parts by heart and practise each scene many times. Of great value when the interpretation is allowed to arise in the pupils' growing insight, such presentations too often suffer from pressures of time and of a future audience, which may lead the teacher to impose his own interpretation.

Plays chosen for classroom use must involve situations within the pupils' imaginative range. Especially appropriate

are those which embody such common experiences as conflict between father and son, isolation in a crowd, guilt, standing up for one's principles, and finding a mate. Scripts with loosely naturalistic dialogue are to be avoided, since this pins the drama to an often alien "here and now" and by its prosaic diffuseness hinders the action from becoming a symbol for the students. Certain plays of Shakespeare answer these requirements best, yet the language makes it difficult to introduce them early without losing the children's imaginative participation. Most to be avoided are the collections of trifling and banal one-act plays in prose. When they recreate scripts of the highest quality, children are taking over not only the dramatist's symbolism but also the language in which it is couched, a language of much subtler allusiveness and organization than they could improvise.

III. INITIATING THE USE OF DRAMA

I am not a specialist drama teacher and have had no training apart from two very short teachers' conferences, conversations with colleagues, and a few books. These made me believe that I should be using dramatic methods, and I began to do so, very simply and with much trepidation. Looking back, I remember how difficult it was to find the confidence to attempt dramatic work, and I write this in the hope of helping other teachers in their early experiments—for they are experiments. These suggestions, therefore, do not come from a highly-trained specialist but from an English teacher who wanted to use drama as one amongst many activities that would help his pupils learn to use their language more fully and sensitively. All the activities to be described I have used with my own pupils. Some of the ideas were my own, some came as suggestions from other teachers, and others were adapted from books; I cannot now hope to remember which were which.

The greatest barrier to classroom drama is probably a teacher's fear of failure, which would quickly be communicated to his pupils. When I began I preferred not to commit myself to a full lesson but chose to do about twenty minutes of drama before changing to some other activity. In drama lessons the teacher has to be ready to

encourage, spur on the unsuccessful, praise almost all his pupils, ask for repetitions, make helpful suggestions, and abandon any activity that promises nothing; and these decisions have to be taken in the heat of the moment, since he cannot foresee how the class will respond to the tasks he gives them. This is demanding work, and while a teacher is still uncertain it is well for him not to ask too much of his inventiveness and confidence. When he and his pupils become used to the situation, he will find that he can sustain an hour and a half without strain.

At best we can hope for a large room—but not too large—and clear of furniture. When I began, the school hall seemed both threateningly large and embarrassingly public, though later I came to do most of my dramatic work there. My first attempts took place in a classroom with some of the desks pushed back. This was unsatisfactory because so few could take part at once: drama can only be valuable if all pupils are active for most of the time. I have since found it possible to engage in very limited dramatic work with all the desks in position, but do so only when compelled. Some drama work can even be done while pupils are sitting at their desks, though this only postpones the frightening moment when the teacher sets his pupils into movement about the room.

At their desks, younger pupils may play at hand drama with one another. The teacher says, "I have *cruel* hands," and his hands mime aggression; "What hands have you?" and the pupils' hands respond. Or older pupils may become people sitting side by side on a bus. "Is he a stranger? A nice young man? Is he glancing at you? What do you do? Haven't you seen that face before? Is he like that picture in the paper? No, I'm just imagining it." The teacher's voice continues to suggest situations and attitudes, and the pupils to mime their responses to these. But activities such as these, although they can easily be related to whatever reading and writing the class is engaged in, are very limited, if only because the constricted situation prevents the pupils from giving themselves fully. As soon as possible, then, the teacher will take his class to the school hall.

Although my own first attempts to persuade pupils to act were based on scripted plays, I do not recommend this as a starting point. The struggle to articulate the words, the need to interpret the dramatist's intention, even the book in the pupil's hands, militate against his using his whole body to express meaning. The art of reading is partly a matter of finding appropriate meanings in oneself at the bidding of the dramatist's words. Pupils who have confidence in their ability to improvise will approach scripted plays in quite a different spirit from those whose norm of reading is the novel, so I recommend beginning with improvisation, whatever the age of the students.

Whenever I ask a class to attempt improvisation, I always plan more than enough activities for the time at my disposal, so that I can select amongst them, and so that I am free of any fear that the developing lesson would find me short of ideas. Where teacher and class are both unused to drama I suggest that each lesson should begin with the teacher tightly in control. The pupils will spread out, their attention first on the teacher and then on the brief solo activities they are engaged in. As self-consciousness and stiffness diminish, the tasks will become longer and less closely teacher-controlled; collaboration in pairs and then in larger groups will be required; and finally, as the groups become confidently involved in their joint tasks, they will take control of their own activities while the teacher watches. This may not be achieved for some time; until it is, each lesson will have to begin with close control again. As the class gains confidence, not only in their ability to improvise but also in the teacher's ability to make the improvisation meaningful, they will pass more quickly during the lesson to an involvement that will make tight control superfluous.

Establishing a Sequence

What kinds of sequence should we aim for within a lesson or series of lessons? I have already hinted at three kinds of development: (a) from teacher control to control by the demands of the task, (b) from individual work to group and then class collaboration, and (c) from purely

imitative actions to actions that express intention, attitude, and personality. The very first actions can be solo ones: lifting a pile of books from the floor to a high shelf; bending to pick up objects of various shapes, sizes, and weights; writing or drawing on an enormous imaginary sheet of glass; imitating the actions of getting ready for school in the morning. More expressive solo activities might include approaching an imaginary dog while the teacher indicates the animal's reactions, or handing an imaginary wounded bird from one pupil to another. Such solo activities help pupils lose self-consciousness by involving them in meaningful movement.

The tasks mentioned so far have involved little movement from place to place, so it is useful next to explore different ways of walking: this can include wading, walking barefoot on pebbles, crossing a stream by stepping-stones, walking along a narrow ledge, groping through a dark tunnel. Such precisely defined tasks are particularly valuable with pupils who are not used to improvisation, since the care and concentration required encourage the self-control and seriousness upon which later work will depend. Younger pupils will walk "like a queen," "like a policeman," or will be "ashamed" or "scornful."

If pupils respond well to these they may be ready for more demanding expressive tasks. With eleven-year-olds, "scorn" and "walking out in new clothes" led to "The Emperor's New Clothes"; they prepared their version of the story, working in groups of about seven or eight. "Walking on tiptoe" led to a sequence in which a group spied on a darkened house, and then to a further sequence in which the thirteen-year-olds explored the dramatic possibilities of whatever they decided to find there. Finding different ways of running to a hiding-place led to exploring the experience of being attacked from the air, and beyond that to situations of suffering and loss in war. The teacher must be quick to notice opportunities; his very necessary preliminary notes are to ensure he does not dry up, not to inhibit his inventiveness.

The teacher can choose whether to attempt expressive work before pupils have begun to work in groups or to

postpone it until they have had some experience working together upon activities which require less personal commitment. If, for example, I am teaching adolescents who have not done much improvisation, I often find it better to have them working together in controlled imitative movements before giving them tasks in which they will have to take the risk of expressing fear or tenderness. The fear of being laughed at is very real, and we must not underrate either its force or its justification.

Nor is it reasonable to expect young adolescents to come from the formality of a mathematics lesson and plunge immediately into pretending to be an explorer cutting his way through the jungle; this would seem an absurd activity, and they might well refuse to take it seriously. Although some teachers use burlesque as part of their normal drama methods, I have always regarded it as a warning that my pupils had not yet warmed up enough to give themselves to a part. I have found it best to give some purely imitative task, such as acting themselves going into a mathematics lesson, sitting down, and preparing to begin; once they have half committed themselves to this they may be ready to take the far greater risk of expressing feelings. Indeed the mathematics lesson exercise itself may enable pupils to express attitudes which in real life they would conceal.

Having introduced expressive work into a lesson in which adolescent pupils have been engaged in solo mime, I may, perhaps, ask each pupil to imagine walking into a coffee bar to look for a friend, knowing everyone in the bar is watching. This is a difficult task and it frightens thirteen-year-olds, so they giggle a little and produce either stiffness or caricatures. I might investigate the caricature with them, but instead decide that this is an activity in which they should be able to involve themselves directly, without the protection of burlesque. I call them to order, insist they look at me and not at each other, since this always decreases self-consciousness and makes burlesque less likely. I say firmly that most of them were not realistic enough. They repeat the task but with little or no improvement. Now what?

With a class like this it may prove best to retreat to collaborative work in pairs and larger groups before re-introducing expressive and personal elements into the tasks. Some young people find it difficult to adjust their movements to one another even in pairs, so we may begin by miming the sawing down of a tree with a long two-handled saw. They represent the effort required, and mime their response to the eventual fall of the tree. After this I might ask them to pretend to be two people standing one on each side of a child sitting on a swing and pushing him to and fro. This is much more difficult and may need several attempts. Such activities direct attention away from consciousness of social role towards consciousness of the relationship of one's movements to one's partner's movements and so minimize self-consciousness. More complex activities of this kind might include being travellers who have to move a log to bridge a chasm before they can cross it or workmen erecting a ladder against a wall or a family putting a new carpet in a room. This last involves identifying the furniture and the doorway, carrying all the furniture from the room, rolling up and removing the old carpet, putting down the new, and replacing the furniture.

Although I have given several examples of work in this category, I do not wish to suggest much time be spent upon it; our aim is to move on to more expressive tasks. The first of these, to be done in pairs, might include: crossing a room secretly while another person mimes unawareness and absorption in a task; a hypnotist controlling his subject's actions through his own; or a naughty urchin mimicking a pompous greengrocer setting out his wares on a stall. These are not only expressive but lead naturally to the introduction of language. I should never stop any pair who wanted to use language as well as gesture in any dramatic task. I use mime solely to help pupils whose movements are inexpressive concentrate upon movement rather than words; once expressive movement has been achieved we want as much talk as possible, both in planning joint activities and in expressing attitudes proper to the characters.

The shopkeeper and urchin mime can develop into a

little drama of personality. It would begin something like this: "You did that very well indeed. I particularly liked the way some of the urchins' whole bodies changed and looked innocent when the greengrocer looked round. Let's do it again, but this time the greengrocer *catches* him, and we'll find out what they say to one another." An attempt at this might be followed by asking what various pairs did say, and then by having a particularly articulate pair repeat their scene in front of the others. Then all the pairs try again. In scenes such as this, it helps to tell pupils to decide before they begin how they will bring the scene to a suitable conclusion.

Developing Controlled Movement

As soon as the teacher relaxes control and begins to ask pairs or groups to organise more lengthy and complex activities, some pupils will be bewildered and need encouragement and suggestions, while others—especially boys—may burst out into vigourous movement previously held in check. The teacher may initially find it necessary to accept some of this exuberance, even scenes involving physical combat that looks very realistic; if disapproval comes too readily, pupils may interpret this as total rejection of everything they have it in them to express. Nevertheless, our eventual aim is controlled movement. If the pupils' concentration lapses, if they lose confidence and start "playing about," there are various methods first to regain a sense of control, and then to persuade pupils to control their own movements. I have told younger pupils I have a Scientific Power in my fingers (the contemporary equivalent of a Magic Power): "My hands give life to you, and you, and you, and you rise up slowly... up, up . . . always looking at me. I dart my power at you and you cower away. I draw you slowly after me against your will . . . you struggle against the power . . . but you have to follow. Suddenly I turn you to stone." And so it goes. I have found this technique surprisingly effective, even with thirteen-year-olds. Another way of persuading pupils to control their movements is to ask them to repeat the activity in slow motion. It often helps too to forbid them

to touch one another: then each has to find a balance within himself, instead of by leaning against others in conflict. (This provides a neat metaphor for a major value of drama—learning to tolerate conflicting feelings within oneself.) Or we can ask the class to invent movements expressing savagery or fear, but give it a structure of alternating quick and slow movements controlled by a slow drumbeat, thus encouraging both expression and control. An alternative to this requires pupils to "freeze" at a handclap.

Various other methods can be used to encourage controlled movement. Younger pupils can be asked to perform short scenes as puppets; then a human character can be introduced so that the Coppelia situation may be explored. Older boys in particular like moving "like a machine" in time to a regular beat provided by handclaps or a small drum. This needs fairly lengthy preparation: I have first asked the class to make machinery movements with an arm. They usually imitate the pistons and cranks of steam machines which move in straight lines or regular curves, and always either continuously at a regular speed, or in regular intermittent movements. When they have explored the possibilities with one part of their body they try such combinations as robot-like walking. Next they plan their movements in pairs—so as to achieve a reciprocal effect—and then in larger groups. Each group is a different machine; my fifteen-year-olds have shown most interesting ingenuity in planning original patterns of collaborative movement.

Although pupils enjoy this greatly, its value is limited by the very quality that probably makes them enjoy it: it allows them a temporary freedom from the need to be a person, the need to express some aspect of their individuality. It is, however, possible to devise tasks which, while relatively impersonal, open up expressive possibilities instead of excluding them as the machine imitations do. One of these I called "Snakes and Monsters" when I used it with pupils of about eleven or twelve, though it could be adapted for older children. During a lesson with this form, after some distressingly uncontrolled movements in a set of scenes which they had made up, I

decided to slow down the movements and help the children stylise them. So I began the following lesson by asking the pupils to pick up an imaginary object from the floor and walk two paces to put it on a table; we spent some time watching one another doing this and discussing how to make it more realistic. Then I asked them to make the same sequence of actions in a slow smooth way, in a quick smooth way, and in a slow heavy way. I had intended to go on to explore other variations but their "slow heavy" movements made me think of monsters, so I told them this and they invented other slow heavy monster movements. Then we tried snakes, and I told them to express snakiness with the whole of their bodies, and reminded them not only to snake out towards me but to snake in all directions, both low and high. When they had exhausted the possibilities of this, I put them into groups of three to mime a battle between two snakes and a monster. I insisted that they must not touch one another during this battle, for I knew that if they did there would no longer be within each one of them an equilibrium between aggression and control, but only an uneasy swaying to and fro of three aggressions, all control gone. I was delighted with the result: it proved to be more truly expressive of violence than their previous scuffles, but now it was stylised and under control. I used a rhythmic beat for this work, but it occurs to me now that I missed an opportunity in failing to use music. This work led to a later lesson in which we attempted a group representation of the opening scene of *Macbeth*.

Improvising from Unscripted Material

Books on drama teaching often suggest that you tell or read a story to a class and then ask them to act it in groups. My experience has been that this often leads to disappointing work. Children of primary age may be unsophisticated enough to plunge into an unplanned and highly unrealistic representation of a story, but older children set themselves higher standards, at least in the matter of naturalism, and usually find a whole story daunting. They need help, not only in building up the kind of social

relationships which will enable groups to discuss and plan their work, but also in breaking down the story into suitable scenes.

Some work with a class of eleven-year-olds illustrates the kinds of help that may be needed. I began by reading them an Eskimo legend, *Sedna and the Hunter*, from R. L. Green's *Once Long Ago* (London: Golden Pleasure Books). I might equally have told the story in my own words. Sedna, a beautiful girl, rejects many suitors until she is enticed away from her widowed father by a mysterious young man who lingers near the shore in his kayak. She goes with her husband across the sea to his home. There she realises that the seabirds who attended their voyage were the souls of men drowned at sea, and that her husband is king of the underworld. In his normal shape he is a huge seabird. She lives sadly in the land of storm and death until one day her father, who has longed for her return, seeks her out, and in her husband's absence carries her away in his kayak. But her husband pursues them with his fierce birds and a storm, until Sedna's father, realising that his kayak will soon sink, throws his daughter overboard and she drowns. But after he has reached home the sea, angry at his cruelty, rises and washes him from the shore, so that he is finally reunited with his daughter and her husband in the land of the dead.

My pupils enjoyed this legend with its powerful images of the tensions of growing up. I put them into groups and told them to act the story. Their first attempts were very poor; bored Sednas went through the motions of being attracted to young men; happy-go-lucky storm gods ambled about with grins on their faces; and the storm scenes completely baffled them. This was not drama, so I stopped them and called the whole class together. Under the guise of checking that they had the events in correct sequence, I drew from the class the structure of the tale and wrote headings on a blackboard.

1. Refuses suitors.
2. Goes away.
3. Discovery and unhappiness.

4. Reunion with father.
5. Pursuit and betrayal. (storm)
6. Father washed away. (storm)
7. Reunion.

Wishing to build a sense of serious purpose, I chose those parts of the action which all could do together—the two storm scenes. My pupils spread out as they had learned to do for individual dramatic work, and, after they had done a few loosening activities, I asked them for storm-movements like waves surging up and breaking. This they did well after I had encouraged them to use the whole range of bodily movement to express the growing and fading violence of the storm. Suddenly I saw in their movements a likeness to those of a seagull. I told them about this—it was perhaps implicit in the legend but I had not realised it—and from then on we made their movements both those of seabirds and of the sea. Next they developed seabird-and-storm movements in groups of three, adjusting their movements to one another. Then in groups of six they tried those scenes where the sea threatens to swamp the kayak and where it washes away Sedna's father. (The pupils miming seabird-and-storm had to "force" the man from the shore without touching him.) Normally I do not have group leaders, since I believe pupils must learn to use language to collaborate in group activities. On this occasion, however, I found it necessary to tell each group of seabirds to regard one boy or girl as leader and to respond to the patterns initiated by his or her movements. Since one or two of the "fathers" were not very successful in miming their struggles against the irresistible force of the sea, we all practised this as solo work before returning to the group work on the storms. Later the class worked in variously sized groups upon each of the other scenes, returning again and again to the storm dance. Finally they went back to their original groups and once again attempted the whole legend; the improvement was almost unbelievable. We ended by every group giving a performance of its own version to the rest of the class. This work took several lessons, perhaps three hours or more in all.

A similar piece of work with fourteen- to fifteen-

year-olds followed a British Broadcasting Corporation Schools Broadcast of *Everyman*. A colleague and I combined our classes to attempt to create a modern version of the play. Together we heard the broadcast, discussed the implications of the play, and began to consider its equivalent in contemporary terms. Then the two classes separated for a number of lessons, each to prepare an improvised version for performance to the other. After my class had discussed and planned "A Modern Everyman"—some of the incidents were excessively sensational to my mind, but I kept this to myself—they divided into groups, one for each of the scenes they had planned. Each group had its own Everyman and other characters, but improvised within the framework laid down by the whole class. At this stage the quality of the acting was very pleasing, but when we tried to amalgamate the scenes into one play with a consistent cast, things deteriorated. This was partly because the pupil chosen as Everyman had to break into groups who had developed a common understanding of their scenes, which he could not share. In any case, improvisations can only be repeated a few times before stiffness sets in. Nor did a written version capture the vitality of the first improvisations; indeed, I have seldom found it valuable to ask pupils to draft scripts for performance. My colleague's class had not divided into groups and had worked with a consistent cast from the beginning. We both felt I had probably spent a little too long on this play, but that the initial stages of the work with both classes had justified the suggestion. With pupils of this age the prospect of a final performance to another class had certainly contributed to their ability to sustain interest through a series of lessons.

Working in Groups

The sequence of activities so far described has tended towards drama in which pupils guide their own work. When the class is working in small groups, each group can first try something out and then talk it over, all of the pupils being involved in the discussion and the effort to improve. Against this manifest advantage of group work

we must place the fact that in full class discussion the teacher can lend to the class his own sense of purpose and his critical sense—that is, his sense of appropriate criteria and standards of judgment. My own practice has been based on the assumption that pupils need both to borrow from the teacher and to have the opportunity to create for themselves; thus, I have aimed at a balance between work in full class and in smaller groups. Once a class is confident of its ability and of the intrinsic worth of dramatic work, pupils will gain greatly from group activities; their common purpose, the task provided by the teacher, and the interplay of personalities combine to generate in the group their own discipline. This discipline will break down only if the class is given a task they cannot take seriously, or if they are faced with failure, either because the task is too difficult or because the mutual trust in the group has broken down.

There seem to be two ways of regarding work in groups: either as preparation for performance to the whole class, or as an end in itself. Some teachers give a task to a group (some methods are suggested below), allow a few minutes for discussion but not for rehearsal, and then have each group perform to the rest as audience. This has the advantage of being possible in a normal classroom with the desks moved back. I have, however, avoided this method, partly because I value extended discussion in the group for its own sake. It is an intensely "real" discussion because practical choices depend on it and is therefore an excellent kind of oral work. But I also believe that during adolescence most pupils are too unsure to explore their inner experience in front of an audience. It is hard enough to be honest within a small group of intimates, all of whom are joining in; acting in front of the class generates either a frigid "give nothing away" stiffness or the presentation of whatever they think their contemporaries will approve. This latter results when they concentrate more upon the effect on the audience than upon their own insight. For these reasons I believe the essential work of exploring the possibilities of themselves and of dramatic situations will be done more readily in the intimacy of a group. In each lesson only a few groups will

reach enough certainty and unanimity to wish to present their improvisation to others, and none should be compelled to do so.

If, then, we are going to have much of the work done in groups and shaped by the pupils themselves, we must make sure to find meaningful activities. What can we offer to pupils between twelve and sixteen years of age, working in groups of from two to eight? We want them to explore together their vision of the world so that they may develop and refine it; we want them to do this honestly and without resort to the protection of conventionalities; we want them to use any dramatic method available, to feel free to use literal imitations of well-known situations or to use unrealistic fantasy situations that will free them from conventional limitations. Our task must partly be to show them the possibilities of drama, but this should be subordinated to helping them gain confidence to use drama to deal with their own more urgent concerns. In each lesson or sequence of lessons we must give our pupils an initiatory experience which will start their imaginations working—one helping them call up whatever of their own experiences and attitudes is relevant.

The kind of starting point I have in mind is a story, an incident, a theme, an idiomatic phrase. The scene dramatised need not be merely an imitation, but can place characters in a different situation or place different characters in a similar situation. The teacher can play a recording of a vivid scene from a scripted play and ask pupils to reconstruct it in improvisation; an extract from a film could be used similarly. Music presents a very different starting point, since it in no way prescribes the nature of the dramatic image that it evokes. The pupils move about, trying various movements to the changing rhythms. The problem here is that each pupil constructs his own dramatic fable at the invitation of the music, whereas drama is a matter of shared fables, shared images. So the next stage must be to talk it over until the most powerful fable captures the group. Then the music is played again, and the group works together to improvise movements related to their common theme.

Another starting point is to put the class in a familiar location—supermarket, football match, coffee bar—and encourage them to explore the possibilities. "What do you do there? What people would you see? What would they be doing? What might happen?" Exploration of everyday reality may eventually take off into symbolic meaning.

Sometimes we can start by supplying a colloquial phrase strongly suggestive of a dramatic situation. I have used such phrases as:

Watch out! It's dangerous.
What would your Mum say?
I never did like the look of him.
But that wasn't what we meant.
We're ashamed of you.
Thank goodness that's over!
I can't believe it.

Clearly the possibilities are almost infinite. Giving a different sentence secretly to each group provides greater variety when all groups perform to the class. It is possible to give an equally free choice in interpreting a theme, such as "Rejected" or "Justice," but this proves more difficult because it suggests an impersonal and general concept which younger pupils may find hard to translate into particular and personal terms. Bits of dialogue are more successful because they suggest preeminently concrete human situations.

Uniting the Work of Groups

Some teachers think it valuable to find some way of uniting the work of groups. I remember that a colleague whose eleven-year-old class had spent several lessons working in "families" upon incidents in the everyday life of these imaginary households brought the groups together by placing them on a street along which two detectives went making enquiries from house to house. The problem set to the pupils was to continue in their assumed roles while they dealt appropriately with this interruption, and then to continue with the improvisation as they had planned it.

On another occasion I worked with thirteen-year-olds on

the theme "Refugees." After reading several poems related to this, we talked about national migrations and what it means to leave one's home. Then, wishing to use drama to increase their personal insight into such experiences, I took them to the school playing field and told them to divide into small groups: "You are refugees travelling in families across a hot and waterless desert. Decide amongst yourselves how you are related, and what kind of a person you are. Remember, you have been driven from the home where you belonged; you face possible death either here or elsewhere. How would you behave, tired and frightened, in the heat of the desert?" The groups talked for a few minutes and then tried out little incidents devised to display the personalities and relationships chosen. Later the whole class talked over the possibilities, and some of the more confident groups showed the others what they had been doing. I had not originally intended to combine the work of the groups, but it suddenly occurred to me that we could become a tribal group without losing the family relationships. A conveniently marked area of the school field became the well they had been travelling towards, and the groups began to move towards it from the far side of the field. The leaders drew ahead and turned, encouraging the others; the strong helped the weak; family squabbles separated some groups, but others drew unity and hope from the leaders. And just as the leaders came to the well I shouted, "You discover it's empty. What do you do?" Most of the groups found an appropriate response, but then the action fell into disorder. I asked them to repeat the climax, but this time to hold their pose when I clapped my hands. This final tableau was magnificent. That evening the pupils wrote poems and prose passages about "anything connected with what we've been doing in the lesson"; almost all of these showed sympathetic insight into the experiences they had been exploring.

What is the teacher's role once he has provided a starting point, outlined a task, and launched the groups on their work? I usually stand back for a while, just watching. It is not necessary to hear all that is said, for it is easy to see which groups have quickly found agreement and are trying out

their idea, which are arguing eagerly, which are frustrated or divided. Then I start walking round; groups that want help will ask for it, the uncertain are spurred on by my audience, and where there are signs of social breakdown I can intervene and suggest solutions—perhaps a third alternative or a regrouping. I do not push myself forward: a teacher often inhibits discussion if he joins in only momentarily; on the other hand, if he stays there, he finds himself taking charge. The teacher serves as an assurance to his pupils that rational discussion and choice are possible.

At a certain stage in a group's work the teacher becomes valuable as a temporary audience, to give enough approval to encourage the group to develop their ideas further. Encouragement is more valuable than criticism; advice comes from outside the situation and may not be available to those inside. The teacher remains the repository of standards; he blocks the escape valve labelled "Anything Goes." To engage in drama is to take the risk of giving part of oneself, perhaps to be rejected. Most of us are tempted to sidestep this risk at some time, and so are our pupils. It is our task to set up a social relationship in which total rejection of what pupils give is impossible. On the one hand, success is warmly celebrated and cruelty or mockery shown to be unacceptable; on the other, avoidance of the task is recognised for what it is, a kind of cowardice, which may at times be necessary.

Interpreting Dramatic Scripts

Although so far I have been concerned primarily with improvised drama, much of what I have written is equally applicable to work based upon dramatic scripts. Two aspects deserve attention: drama as a social act and drama as a creative act.

Drama is not a matter of "knowing about" but of "doing." Does the acting of a written play relate to improvisation in the same way as reading a story relates to writing one? Perhaps so, but the important distinction is that as readers we recreate a story in isolation, but as actors we recreate a play in collaboration with others. Drama is ideal for teaching just because it is in its very nature a public activity, overt, done

"out there," shared with others. Thus, unlike our pupils' response to reading, it is already public, ready to be worked on; it does not have to be dragged out into the light and thereby altered. To say that drama is "creative" as well as "social" is to stress its relevance to the pupils' grappling with their own lives; each of us lives in a separate world of experience, which to some extent we create for ourselves. Drama helps us to learn how to adjust to the world we share with others and to create a new world of our own. In improvisation pupils make new their experience through their own language; in acting a scripted play they can, with help, make new their experience through the dramatist's language. What I find sad to contemplate is the many secondary "drama" lessons in which this does not happen, in which the dramatist's language is never made enough the pupils' own to "make new their experience." It is all too easy in the name of The Play As Literature to deny our pupils a literary response by denying them the dramatic experience. We begin with improvisation partly because it is valuable in itself, and partly because it prepares pupils for the more difficult task of finding their own meanings in works of literature.

Earlier I illustrated a method of progressing from unscripted to scripted drama by describing work leading to group acting of part of *Androcles and the Lion*. In fact the class went on to act the whole play, but not in such detail as they had prepared the Prologue. Here too I shall deal with isolated scenes from plays, but I am assuming that in bringing a scene to life we are helping pupils respond to whole plays. To deal with each scene in such detail would destroy all sense of sequence; to rush through the whole play "just for the story" would be to shrug off our responsibility of helping pupils make it their own. To make detailed work on selected scenes a part of a total recreation of the play seems the best compromise. In teaching abler secondary school boys and girls, I found it valuable to use isolated extracts, scenes, or groups of scenes from Shakespeare; if I attempted a whole Shakespeare play with a class younger than thirteen or fourteen they became discouraged. Some pupils clearly gained from reading the whole play, but against this I had to balance signs in many pupils of that

dislike of Shakespeare that it is all too easy to create. In the end I chose to postpone approaching a full Shakespeare play until my pupils were thirteen or fourteen; other teachers may choose differently, but I wanted my pupils to feel that literature was theirs, not something forced on them.

When I approached a full play with older pupils I decided in advance which scenes or parts of scenes could be omitted and summarised; which could be "acted" in front of the class by the best readers, warned in advance; which could be run through once by the whole class in pairs or larger groups; and which could be worked on in detail. These last I usually chose because they presented situations and feelings likely to have symbolic significance for adolescents, likely to make connections with their most personal experiences. But when it came to carrying out my plan I frequently found it necessary to make changes in it, as the following examples will illustrate.

It had occurred to me that being caught playing when they should be working was a not unfamiliar experience to young people. I decided to tap their memories of a mixed sense of guilt and resentment as a basis for a recreation of the first scene of *Julius Caesar*. So I took my class to the school hall and told them to make up little scenes in which adults caught them doing something they knew they should not be doing. This they did readily because they had been doing this sort of improvisation for years. I asked them to talk about what they felt, and some of them were able to put into words their ambiguous responses. Then the groups improvised scenes in which trade union officials harangued unofficial strikers. This was harder, of course; the responses of those of the groups who were bystanders were not at all well done. So I decided to separate the task of acting the protagonists from that of acting the bystanders. First, all the class worked in pairs as workman and official and then repeated the scene with roles exchanged.

Then we concentrated on the bystanders. The class thought of various amusements which they claimed to use as pastimes and gathered into groups of appropriate size to mime these amusements. When all the groups scattered about the hall were engaged in these diverse games, I

withdrew the two pupils whom I had observed to be the most effective trade union officials. These thrust their way to the centre and berated the whole class; they were answered insolently by their former partners. At this point I stopped them and asked the class what response the others might show. After some suggestions had been discussed, the whole improvisation was repeated, this time with considerable improvement both in individual performance and in collaboration. It must have taken nearly an hour and a half to reach this point, for the lesson now ended, but it was not difficult the following day to have the improvisation of the whole scene repeated.

Then I distributed copies of *Julius Caesar*. I can not pretend that work on the script was an immediate success: the class had to grapple with the unfamiliar language and different tempo of Shakespeare's scene, and this required a number of repetitions in which their attention was more on the verse than on their movements. We had to isolate for special attention the crowd's response to the tribunes and to discuss the tone of voice implicit in the cobbler's speeches. Yet by the end of the second double period the class was producing quite a commendable crowd scene, having invented most of the details for themselves. By such concentration on a scene of limited importance, I was able to show the class that Shakespeare was writing about people today as well as about his contemporaries, though I probably did not say so explicitly. Our work on the rest of the play was not, of course, always so detailed. It often did not need to be, because the class was already convinced that this was something they could find meaningful.

My next example, this time unplanned, comes from the same play but not from the same class. The pupils concerned were again fourteen-year-olds. In planning the work I had decided to shorten the scene on the Lupercal and to run through it rapidly, concentrating on one section to bring out Cassius' manipulation of Brutus' feelings. I hoped that the class—who on this occasion had read the scene in advance—would gain enough from one reading (in trios) of the Casca-Cassius-Brutus episode to allow us to continue. But it soon became clear from their acting that they had

no imaginative conception of Casca the eccentric, the tensed-up comic raconteur expressing his half-suppressed hatred in the absurd story of Caesar's fit. I did not expect them to be able to put this into words, but merely to show some awareness of it in Casca's manner and in the response of the others. I suspected that they were half aware of it and that the failure was to find dramatic expression for this awareness, so I decided to encourage an increased expressiveness of movement and gesture.

At the beginning of the following lesson, therefore, the class improvised in pairs. I did not mention Casca but said: "I want you to imagine that you are watching two women through a window. There's a very talkative one who's telling the other how she found that her new hat had a hole in it, took it back to the shop, made the shopgirl call the manager, and told the manager what she thought of him. You can't hear a thing she says, only see her telling her friend about it." Then I went on to supply, in a strong stage-Cockney accent, the woman's patter, while the pairs of pupils mimed the conversation, one making the expressive gestures of the raconteur and the other her friend's responses. Then we did it again with roles reversed. I noticed that the boys particularly enjoyed doing it. In retrospect, my choice seems a strange one as a preparation for the tragic-comic episode with Casca. What made it effective, perhaps, was that my assumed accent implied a very self-assertive, outgoing London woman, and this, together with the artificial situation, encouraged the class to rather exaggerated, eccentric gestures. When we returned to Casca, my pupils certainly caught the eccentric raconteur, but I am not certain they expressed the hatred implicit in Casca's burlesque.

A cruder example of breaking the reading of a play in order to engage the class more fully occurred when a class of fourteen-year-olds were acting *Henry IV, Part One*. The scene in which Hotspur defies the king and then rages to his father and uncle usually repays detailed attention, but for some reason this particular class were unwilling to give themselves to the experience (or to one another and me, perhaps). We happened to be on the school field while they were working on the scene in groups of four, so I called

them together, hurriedly racking my brains for a situation that would involve both voice and body in a group expression of resentment. I thought of a revolutionary mob and asked the class what such a mob might chant. There were several suggestions made, and I chose the most markedly rhythmic of them, "We won't put up with it!" First I had them shout it repeatedly; then as the tension increased I encouraged them to express the violence rhythmically with their bodies, and finally to advance upon me across the field as a revolutionary mob, chanting and waving weapons. They did not lack rebellious feelings, it appeared; they had merely failed to summon them up for Shakespeare's scene. Our task as teachers of literature is partly to help our pupils attend to the words and partly to help them summon up whatever of their own experience is relevant. Drama lessons of the sort I am describing do both, by helping pupils link their own experience with that presented in literature and by emphasising dramatic interpretation of the script so that more precise attention to it is required.

In approaching a script a teacher has two main options: he can present a scene, or even a whole play, to his pupils, let them read and try to act it, and then work out in discussion which parts they should work on in detail; or he can prepare his own analysis before the class approaches the text. The latter is certainly easier for the teacher to manage, but it is perhaps less valuable for the pupils. If we believe the purpose of dramatic methods to be to affect the personality and attitudes of the pupils by involving them in creative activities, then we must accept that the more the teacher has to do for his pupils, the less they will gain from the activity. I have found it valuable to explain to older pupils that in reading a play our task is to interpret into voice and movement the black marks on paper, and to illustrate this by directing them to particular points in a play to work out what intonations and movements are implicit in the dialogue. This helps pupils not only to understand the nature of interpretation but also to come closer to the particular play they are studying. Each choice of intonation or gesture derives, they discover, both from

the language at that point and from their own overall conception of the play. Herein lies much of the value of detailed discussion of "How should we say this speech?"—it requires attention to the language and interpretation in the light of the whole.

I put this version of our task as readers and interpreters to a class of fifteen-year-olds who were studying *Henry V* for an examination. I sent them to various parts of the play to discuss with one another details of interpretation. A trivial detail remains in my mind, mainly because it was the passage that most surprised the class. We were looking at the lines spoken by the king to Sir Thomas Erpingham before Agincourt, and the class was surprised to find that, in deciding on the tones and gestures that best accounted for the pauses and changes of focus in the king's speech, they had said something about Henry's personality. This enabled me to point out that a proper reading of a play requires a continuous act of imagination extending through every line.

I have already implied there is much to be gained from making pupils responsible for much of the examining and recreating of the text. I have found this particularly valuable with older pupils who are studying a play for an external examination, requiring study in such detail there is severe danger of stultification. With fifteen- to sixteen-year-olds I have found it useful, after a first run through of the kind I have described, to hand over large sections of the play to groups of pupils. Working individually and together, they spend considerable time in preparing to present their section to the rest of the class and in making themselves ready to lead the class in discussion of the section. They may need assistance in choosing which questions to ask themselves. My intention is that their discussion of how to interpret details will take them towards larger issues, of character and motive, and beyond that to some account of the relationship of their section to the whole play. I usually spend a good deal of time joining in with the groups so I can unobtrusively suggest issues that require attention. Much of the discussion is not, of course, at an adult level, but this is counterbalanced by the pupils' greater involve-

ment in the work, which helps to sustain their attention. The subsequent acting and discussion not only provide a proper culmination for the group work but give me an opportunity to call attention to various aspects of the play in an informal way. A sense of shared purpose is nothing but gain, and worth the expenditure of a good deal of time.

It is possible to give still more of the responsibility to the class. My next examples are taken from work with classes of highly able seventeen-year-olds who were committed to English literature as a two-year special study for an external examination. One class of these sixth formers had acted *Antony and Cleopatra* the previous year, going through it very rapidly, and most of them had turned it into a pop play glorifying Love At Any Price. My task was to help them see what I believe to be in the play without destroying their enthusiasm. I gave to one group the task of investigating the scenes including Antony and to another those including Cleopatra; they were to find out what feelings these characters expressed and how Shakespeare's language indicated ways to present the characters and their motives. The investigation was partly a matter of trying out different versions of scenes and partly a matter of critical discussion. With another sixth-form class studying *King Lear*, I chose a number of themes, such as "The Approach of Old Age and Death," and asked groups of pupils to work on them in various ways culminating in a report back to the full class. There is much to be gained from treating the study of literature as such a joint exploration rather than as the handing on of truths predigested by the teacher.

In discussing my experience with classroom drama, I have travelled from improvisatory work with eleven-year-olds to the study of literary texts with highly selected seventeen-year-olds. I realise that my initial stress on improvisation and my later stress on literary study are open to two contradictory misinterpretations. I hope that these misinterpretations will cancel each other out, since I believe neither that our pupils can draw all wisdom and insight from out of themselves, nor that they are empty vessels into which we have only to pour the wine of literature.

I believe that our task as English teachers is to help our pupils to use language to explore and develop the world they live in—"both what they half create/ And what perceive," and that whether they are using their own words or those of the dramatist, we should subordinate all other considerations to furthering that exploration and development.

IV. A FINAL WORD

What teachers do we need to provide the type of education we have advocated? They must be people who are able to acknowledge and communicate their own variousness, who can tolerate the uncertainty of a classroom in which the unexpected not only may happen but is intended to happen. Successful drama teaching grows from a combination of careful planning of the classroom situation and sufficient perceptiveness of what is going on in it to make possible an inspired opportunism. Teachers should have practical experience of dramatic work partly to enable them to teach it but especially to help their own self-development. Insisting on the importance of drama for the verbally gifted as well as for the verbally deprived, Adams wrote:

> It is from the verbally gifted that the future generation of teachers will very largely be drawn; if today we suffer from an over-academic education of our teachers, we perpetuate this if we deny to our most capable pupils a full participation through education in drama.

We cannot, however, with one magic stroke fill the schools with primary and secondary teachers trained in this way; it will take at least a generation. Our immediate aims must be more modest. As many teachers as possible should attend

courses of perhaps a week in length which should provide them with enough experience of dramatic work to enable them to benefit from the books available. (See Appendix C.) Adams discussed methods of providing the training:

> We would urge upon training institutions the need to give teachers experience in drama work as part of their professional training, in practice rather than simply in theory; and we would see the English department of the school as an important instrument of training here. It is possible, for example, to combine classes so that the teacher with the most experience in drama can work alongside his less expert colleagues and in this way can help their training while educating the children also. A particular value of drama lies in its flexibility which adapts it to both group and team teaching methods.

We can look forward too to a time when at least one teacher in every secondary school English department will have been thoroughly trained in drama. But we must reassert that to hand all drama teaching over to him as a drama specialist would be most ill-advised: he would not come to know his students as well, and the many possibilities for interaction between the dramatic and other uses of language would be unfortunately curtailed.

The teacher who introduces drama into the classroom takes a very real responsibility upon himself. We have all seen pupils blossom or shrivel in dramatic work, and we are compelled to acknowledge that we could not control the dramatic interplay even if we wished to do so. On the playground the pupils are finding their groups and subgroups—or their isolation—and taking up roles within them that provide some security and protection. But in the drama room we break down these temporary stabilities and safeties and make the children try other roles. Those who can will grow, but what of those who are not yet ready? On the playground they can escape from the intolerable situation, but not in our drama lesson. So we risk serious harm to them.

It is the isolate who is most likely to be harmed. The children who will not associate with him on the playground will let him know he is not wanted in the acting group. The child used only to adults will not be able to join in the group's image-building; his own inner dialogue will be

couched in language and shaped into myths too different from theirs. The deprived child or the child with the minority accent may be rejected yet again or confined to comic or class-defined roles which will limit, not extend, his conception of the roles open to him in life. For the outsider, drama is likely to reinforce a sense of failure and rejection.

We say drama will extend the roles a child can choose from, but what of those children who are always given the same kind of role? What of the girl repeatedly cast as a nasty old woman, from the witch in the fairy tale to the witch in *Macbeth*? Of the tall, heavy girl in the girls' school always cast as a man? Of the pretty boy in the boys' school always assigned parts underlining his feminine characteristics? This is not education but constriction, the drama lesson reinforcing the group's pressure on the child to conform to an imposed role.

The teacher should be aware too of the older student who has found a role in life: he may refuse to risk his hard-won security by joining in drama. For some pupils the impersonality of the scientific mode may be a life-style which, although inadequate by some standards of self-awareness, is essential to their stability. Even if they try to act, they will probably fail to enter the part. Do they not have the right to refuse? Should we even ask them?

Clearly in directing dramatic activities—as in all teaching—the teacher can hardly be too aware of his pupils' needs and vulnerabilities. Yet we are after all not recommending anything approaching psychodrama. We are setting up a situation of social interaction in which diversity is encouraged, in which students are partly free of the forfeits demanded by real life, and in which they can explore potentialities while hidden behind a persona. Our task is to know when to encourage, when even to insist, but also when to allow them to sidestep a problem by directing them into a new task. All of our pupils are potentially at our mercy, no matter how strong some of them may seem. Perhaps in drama as it is envisaged here the teacher becomes more vividly aware of what harm he can at the worst do; this awareness will do nothing but good to his teaching as a whole.

What we are recommending, in sum, is not only that drama activities be part of all English teaching, but that all English teaching approach the condition of drama. Teachers must direct attention more and more to the experience, the reality, the fact, and away from the purely academic study of literature and language. Drama in its very nature diverts attention from the predetermined, the prescribed, the inert, towards whatever is growing, whatever it is that boys and girls can make by meaningfully living their lives together in a community. And our democracies have no greater need than for men and women who are on good terms with themselves and capable of joining warmly with others.

Appendix A:

A SECONDARY SCHOOL DRAMA SYLLABUS

This syllabus, largely drawn up by Anthony Adams, Head of the English Department at Churchfields School in West Bromwich, England, suggests one way in which the various suggestions made during the course of this discussion can be brought together into a coherent order, though the implicit definition of "drama" is perhaps less inclusive than that on which we have relied. The program prescribed is designed for a four-year course in a comprehensive secondary school.

The Churchfields Drama Syllabus

General: **In teaching drama we are seeking to provide a means of growth in imaginative experience for our pupils which is both valid in its own right and which will also inform and transfer to their written work. It is a central activity in the English course and is as vital to the progress of "academic" sets as to the remainder. It is also important that training in drama be progressive throughout the course and not tail off at the end of the second year. Normally about one period in a five-period week should be devoted to the drama section of the course.**

Aim: **It cannot be too strongly stressed that this work has**

no direct connection with the work of theatricals in other respects. We are aiming at the development of the individual children in our classes, not the production of professional actors. On the other hand successful experience of drama in the first years of the course should lead to an increased ability to tackle the scripted play later and, in this way, link up with the literature work done in the remainder of the syllabus.

Principles and Methods

1. *Audience:* At the beginning of the course always, and in the later stages frequently, no audience will be required. In basic movement exercises, for example, it is best to have the whole class working at the same time—the actor will generally provide his own audience in this work, and the stress should be upon doing things rather than on exhibiting them to others. At a later stage the discipline involved in the production of a polished presentation may have some value, but this aspect should never be over-stressed.

2. *Staging:* Drama work should generally be done "in the round," and free, wide-ranging movement encouraged. The stage is normally irrelevant to our purposes until late in the course, although the potentiality of different levels of staging through the use of drama rostra may be grasped early in the course. (The extensive use of dining halls and auditorium space for drama and movement work is strongly recommended.)

3. *Improvisation:* It is the core of the course. The scripted play, when used at all, will always be approached via improvisation rather than directly. The ideas from drama should emerge from the children and the class situation, not from textbook sources.

4. *Music*: A great deal of valuable movement and drama work can emerge out of the stimulus provided by music, and a stock of records should be available for this purpose.

5. *Mime:* As a formalised activity it is not to be encouraged, but as a basis for imaginative and movement work it is most useful. Practice in doing things through

mime will transfer not only to an understanding of situations and the people involved in them but also to written work.

6. *Group Work*: Drama is essentially a group activity and the emergence of small groups as a basis for the work arising out of a great deal of individual work in the earliest stages is to be strongly encouraged.

7. *Play Reading:* This is a valuable activity, though quite distinct from drama proper. Strongly recommended is group play reading (on the analogy of group reading in primary school). This provides a widening imaginative and literary experience and, at the same time, practice in reading aloud, especially valuable for the less able children.

8. *Lesson Planning*: In this aspect of English teaching, more perhaps than any other preparation, both the individual lesson and sequence of lessons are essential. Discipline from the start is essential and the class should become accustomed to a definite routine for beginning and ending each section of the lesson. The following plan will be helpful in establishing a norm:

a) *Class Work.* Individual activities under the teacher's direction, often preparatory for work to be tackled under (c);
b) *Pair or Group Work* with each group tackling the same or related work;
c) *Free Group Work or Whole Class Activity.* Often an activity emerging out of the earlier group work begun under (b), relating the activity of one group to that of another;
d) *Relaxation* work to wind down and prepare the class for its next lesson.

9. *Links with other work*: Every effort should be made to establish close links between work in drama and that done elsewhere in the course. Thus dramatisation, aided often by music, myths, and legends is a valuable part of the work in the first year, and such activity as movement through a desert may often usefully be followed by written work on related subjects. It is because drama is seen as an integral

part of the whole English syllabus that the provision of a separate drama department, as distinct from the English department in the school, would not be regarded as a good thing.

> ***Above all drama is essentially a practical subject and is learned through doing rather than through theorising about it.***

Particular Aspects of Individual Years. Note that the pace should not be pushed too hard. Speech, for example, should emerge naturally out of movement and mime, and some of the less able pupils will not be able to manage the more theoretical sections of the syllabus. Even with the most able pupils the scripted play should always arise out of improvisation rather than the other way round.

In the following syllabus "dramatisation" differs from "improvisation" in that it implies a definite "shaping" of the material in a consciously dramatic form.

First Year

a) *Improvisation (1)*: Based upon occupational activities, settings of everyday situations, objects, characters, and scenes. A great deal of this work will originate in mime, and speech will enter rapidly as an extension of this.

b) *Dramatisation of Story*: Material drawn from fable, folk tale, mythology, literature, history, geography, etc. (This can progress throughout the year with dramatisation developing from a story-a-week basis to polished improvisations extending over three to four weeks.)

c) *Movement (1):* Music, Movement, and Mime—(A) Introductory Activities (i) without external rhythms; (ii) with external rhythms provided by percussion or music on records; (iii) free movement and mime echoing rhythm and mood of music. (B) Movement to a simple story told by teacher, amplified by discussion and practice, and created as a complete unit with admixture of dialogue, music, narrative, movement and mime.

Possible presentations:

1. Any polished version of (a) or (b).

2. Symposium of speech, drama, music, poetry, song—built around a seasonal festival (e.g., Harvest), and incorporating, where possible, the children's own writing.
3. A developed story from (c)—e.g., to L'Arlésienne, Night on a Bare Mountain, Hall of the Mountain King.
4. The Nativity—mime sequence and groupings with readings and carols—see John Arden, *The Business of Good Government*, and possible improvisation and adaptions from medieval miracle plays.

Second Year

a) *Improvisation (2)*: (A) Aiming at scenario (mime) and dialogue (speech). "Polished improvisation" first, scripted later; (B) Play making, i.e., deliberate reshaping of material (both story and ideas) to provide exposition, climax and conclusion, and dramatic compression. (For a good example of playmaking see John Arden, *Death of a Cowboy*.)

b) *Movement (2)*: (i) Exploration of space, time, weight, direction, and qualities of movement by imaginative exercises and the use of percussion and music; (ii) Mood in music and expression of mood in mime and free dance; (iii) Development of ritual dance and story with dance situations.

c) *The Script Play (1)*: Approached by narrative and improvisation of characters, situations, and scenes.

Possible presentations:

1. Any of (a), (b), or (c).
2. The Nativity or Passion story (or mythical material)—still with music and mime but also with patches of improvised or scripted dialogue, where appropriate.

Third Year

a) *The Script Play (2)*: Text either (i) approached by improvisation or (ii) amplified and clarified by improvisation [see also (c) below].

b) *Movement(3):* Dance drama—primitive ballet created with or without story to music or percussion.
c) *Improvisation (3):* Simple "Social Drama"—conventional situations first—interviews, votes of thanks, public speeches—links with oral work and crowd sequences.
d) *The Theatre at Work (1)*: Staging—scenery, lighting.

Fourth Year

a) *The Script Play (3)*: Play study, with acting but with or without production.
b) *Movement (4)*: "Dance drama" (optional work at this stage—child created).
c) *The Theatre at Work (2)*: Make-up, costume, settings, organisation. A theatre visit after a preliminary study of the play and discussion afterwards, linked with an organised tour of the theatre is an invaluable part of this aspect of the course.
d) *Play Production:* A term's work as a project—open-air, summer term? (in any case an optional activity).
e) *Improvisation (4)*: (i) Used for clarification in Play Study, Production and extracts for History of the Theatre sections: (ii) Social Drama—a. Continuation of conventional situations: b. Playing out of adolescent and adult situations in speech and drama.

Note on Shakespeare: Little has been said directly about Shakespeare in the syllabus because it is felt strongly that he is part of a subject, rather than a subject in himself, and should be introduced naturally as part of the drama course. It should be realized, however, that there is a strongly built-in resistance to Shakespeare on the part of many of our children, and if this is to be overcome the introduction of Shakespeare must be very gradual and tactful. The use of extract material will find a natural place in the third-year syllabus above and, generally speaking, there should be no attempt to introduce a complete play until the fourth year, and even then judicious cutting is advisable. Ideally the first introduction to a complete play should come through the enjoyment of a theatrical performance. Probably *Macbeth* and an adapted version of *Julius Caesar* are the best with which to start.

Appendix B:*
DRAMA IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

This short appendix will do no more than suggest how the approaches described in this pamphlet may be modified for use with younger children. Most of the books listed in Appendix C also contain sections dealing with drama in the primary school, though their discussions vary in completeness and value.

In both the United States and the United Kingdom, dramatic activities are an important part of primary education. Their goals are:

1. to develop language skills,
2. to foster creative expression,
3. to enlarge the vocal and experiential repertoire of of the child, and
4. to initiate engagement with literature.

The content of primary school drama has two main sources: fantasy drawn from fairy tales, myth, children's books and television programmes; and situations from first-hand experience.

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*This appendix is based partly on notes written by James Moffett after conversations with primary teachers at the Dartmouth Seminar, including Bernice Christenson, Sybil Marshall, Connie Rosen, and Miriam Wilt.

In the United Kingdom, however, there has been a marked emphasis upon movement-in-space, divorced from language and usually associated with music or with Physical Education. "Movement" has tended towards dance, seen as a form of self-expression. An increasing belief, however, that the first years of a child's speech are crucial not only for his language development but for his whole social and educational future has recently led to an increased interest in younger pupils' speech. This seems likely to modify the emphasis upon "music and movement." It seems true, however, that some younger children find difficulty in speaking and moving at once.

Four kinds of dramatic work can develop side by side:

1. movement, sometimes with music,
2. free play, with clothes for dressing-up, and other adaptable "properties,"
3. enactment of familiar stories, and
4. exploration of the life around them.

Younger children often improvise more freely when they can mask their own identity and thus more easily assume another. A hat or a bit of clothing, a mask or sceptre, often does the trick. Puppets and marionettes have the advantage of allowing the child to hide while speaking. Props help the child to invent, release him from the here and now. For some children, the more adaptable and unspecific the props are, the better: children often ignore elaborately explicit toys and play happily with cartons and bits of wood. Just because the carton does not insist on having a single meaning, because it is not identified as representing one particular thing, it can be adapted to whatever need the moment brings. Props such as furniture, kitchen utensils, huts and houses big enough to be played in can all widen the children's imaginative play, either by freeing their imagination or by leading it towards aspects of the reality around them. Telephones have a special value in simulating a conversation not indissolvably linked to what is being done at the moment, and therefore requiring an unusual explicitness.

The teacher's role in primary school drama is less directive than has been suggested for the early stages of drama at secondary level. Younger children are far less

able to take over tasks defined by the teacher, so that the teacher will set out not to define tasks but to provide stimuli. What can be done is limited in one sense by the children's development. A teacher who ignores this courts failure and a puzzled and unruly class. But in another sense what can be done is less limited, in that younger children are much less self-conscious than adolescents are. The primary school teacher may participate in or lead predrama discussions, sometimes shift pupils from one group to another, and generally provide confidence, interest, and encouragement. A few teachers would go further and hold that the teacher may ask prompting questions during an improvisation, or make an effort to engage withdrawn pupils, though all agree that this last should be very gentle and that in extreme cases the pupil should be allowed to watch until he is ready to act.

The work in drama does develop in definable sequences, yet these sequences exist on two levels. They are inescapable sequences of development which continue over years, but as the children become older, they become short-term sequences through which a class may pass in coming closer to a particular experience. Or put another way, the earlier stages should never be left behind, but should coexist with new procedures which the children's development has made possible. These sequences are:

1. Individual—pair—group—whole class.
2. Movement-in-space—pantomime—verbal improvisation.
3. Free play—selection of dialogue and action.
4. Unpatterned spontaneity—planned performance for peers.
5. Unscripted—children's own scripts—adult scripts.

These sequences require some annotation, however. (1) One way of involving the whole class is to use those who remain as a kind of chorus, half-way between participants and audience, joining in the main action by responding to it rather than initiating it. (2) It has already been suggested that verbal improvisation should not be delayed too long. (4) Planned performance even for peers should come late and be used sparingly. Performance for parents is irrelevant and

disrupting, and should be avoided. (5) The use of scripts can begin with the writing down of an occasional successful improvisation, but even this should be delayed until nearly the secondary stage. Pupils can also write scripts for stories they have heard or to clothe plots (perhaps of miracle plays) told to them by the teacher. (Hardly any adult scripts are suited to use at the primary stage.)

Appendix C:

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DRAMA BOOKS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. Pemberton-Billing, R. N., and A. B. Clegg. *Teaching Drama.* London (in U.S.: New York: International Publications Service).
   The best single book for teachers. Good practical advice set into an acceptable theoretical framework.

2. Slade, P. *An Introduction to Child Drama.* London (N.A. in U.S.)
   Much more accessible than the same author's seminal (but massive) *Child Drama.* Eminently practical.

3. Way, B. *Development through Drama.* London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd. (in U.S.: New York: Humanities Press, Inc.)
   Contains far more detailed suggestions than most teachers would ever need to use. An exceptionally thorough account of movement work and how language can arise from it. Very practical; sensitive to children as people. Very highly recommended, especially to experienced teachers.

4. Hodgson, J., and E. Richards. *Improvisation.* London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. (in U.S.: New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc.)

A densely serious book which is worth careful study. Although primarily concerned with theory, gives useful classroom advice, especially on the transition from improvisation to scripts.

5. Burton, E. J. *Drama in Schools.* London: Herbert Jenkins, Ltd. (N.A. in U.S.)
Unpretentious, practical, brief, and to the point.

6. Gray, V., and R. Percival. *Music, Movement and Mime for Children.* London: Oxford University Press (in U.S.: New York: Oxford University Press).
The best book on drama with youngest school children. Suggests actual wording for the teacher's instructions.

7. Bruford, R. *Speech and Drama.* London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. (in U.S.: New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc.)

8. Bruford, R. *Teaching Mime.* London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. (in U.S.: New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc.)
Useful source books for extra ideas, but not ideal for the teacher who is beginning.

9. Bruce, V. R. *Dance and Dance Drama in Education.* London: Pergamon Press Ltd. (in U.S.: New York: Pergamon Press, Inc.)
Frankly intended for girls and women. Useful details about work in Colleges of Education. The theoretical approach (which is oriented towards Laban) is heavy and not altogether satisfying.

10. Alington, A. F. *Drama in Education.* London: Blackwell & Mott, Ltd. (N.A. in U.S.)
Many teachers have found this a useful first book. Good on transition to scripted drama, but the author seems to believe in direct speech-training. Not as much practical advice as other books offer.

11. Courtney, R. *Teaching Drama.* London: Cassell & Co. Ltd. (N.A. in U.S.)
Tends to separate movement from language; quite unacceptable approach to speech, including exercises. Chapters on "Improvisation" and "Movement and

Mime" are recommended, as is the very full bibliography.

(Although this bibliography refers only to works published in the United Kingdom, it would be ungrateful not to mention one American book, *Drama: What Is Happening* by James Moffett (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1967) since the ideas it expresses have contributed so much to this pamphlet.)